

Criteria for Making Decisions for Sustainability
(Green Group—March 2012)

- Consider payback time frame of green features—e.g. life cycle cost analysis.
- Design for low maintenance and use long-life materials for both the interior and exterior. Build for 100 years or more.
- Provide for livability/aesthetics of spaces in addition to green attributes. For example, make sure it does not feel industrial, but is a welcoming, comfortable, quiet place with fresh air quality, natural lighting, warm floors, soothing color palette, and harmonious indoor and outdoor spaces.
- Maximize natural potential for “green” approach, considering the site’s advantages such as solar access. Building should be oriented so that it can be heated by passive solar.
- Use local materials and products; use concepts and approaches that fit our local climate.
- Stage for the future as well as for current benefit. Consider technologies yet to be developed. Be ready for changes in cost and availability of energy resources.
- Allow for flexibility/adaptability/expandability in material selection and systems design to incorporate emerging technologies (such as geothermal) or technologies that may decrease in cost (photovoltaic).
- Keep it simple—selecting easy-to-use systems and low maintenance materials.